

AMPIA 2019 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING - MINUTES

Saturday November 16, 2019 1:00 PM

Red Deer College – Red Deer, AB

Board:

Michelle Gayse, Michael Jorgensen, Helen Schmidt, Janet Hamley, Michelle Wong, Dylan Pearce, Justine Gamez Huckabay, Laura O'Grady, Dylan Pearce, Eric Rebalin, Brent Kawchuk, and Neil Campbell

Staff:

Bill Evans, Colette Switzer

AMPIA Members in Attendance:

Sharlene Millang, Gregory Pang, Matt Watterworth, Scott Lepp, Don Armstrong, Dave Schultz, Nicole Murphy, Jason Steele, and Kathy Fedori

Guest: Tom Gee, RSM Alberta LLP

Volunteer: Janelle Switzer

AMPIA Members voting by proxy:

Kaitlan Stewart, Mark Wood, Doug Cole, Connie Edwards, Chris Hsiung, Tina Alford, Chad Blain, Geordie Day, Brett Ferster, Troy Greenwood, Adam Scorgie, Derek Heisler, Carolyn Bridget Kennedy, Ken Bitz, Chris Krieger, Eunice Hau, Michael Peterson, Doug Munroe, Corey Loranger, Sean Smith, Andrew Scholotiuk, and Aristides Tito Guillen

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| 1. Welcome | Bill Evans |
| 2. Call to order – 1:11 pm | Michael Jorgensen |
| 3. Approval of Agenda | Michael Jorgensen |

Motion: Michelle Gayse-Leader moved to accept the agenda as presented Seconded by Neil Campbell. Carried

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| 4. Approval of 2019 AGM Minutes | Michael Jorgensen |
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Motion: Helen Schmidt moved to accept the 2019 AGM Minutes as presented Seconded by Neil Campbell. Carried

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| 5. Treasurer's Report | Helen Schmidt and Tom Gee - RSM |
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Motion: Janet Hamley moved to accept the 2018/19 Financial Statements as presented, Seconded by Justine Gamez-Huckabay. Carried

Motion: Michelle Gayse Leader moved to appoint RSM Alberta LLP for 2020-21 Year End Financial Review, Seconded by Michelle Wong. Carried

- 6. Executive Directors Report (Verbal) **Bill Evans****
a. When budget was announced from Provincial Government, grants to Cultural Industries were cut by 8%
b. Contracted Boom Goes The Drum for 2020 Rosie Awards
c. Currently looking at the Orange Hub for office space. Currently with office in the Orange Hub are ESIO, Fava and WIFTA.
d. Currently do not have the position of Communications Director filled.
- 7. Chair Report **Michael Jorgensen****
See Attached
- 8. Committee Reports - See attached**
- Eric Rebalkin (Industrial Relations)
 - Dylan Pearce (Prof. Development)
 - Brent Kawchuk (Events & Awards)
 - Michelle Gayse (Story & Branding)
 - Laura O'Grady (Membership)
- 9. Election of Directors**
- Justine Gamez-Huckabay (N), Scott Lepp (P), Laura O'Grady (P), Matt Watterworth (P) and Michelle Wong (N) were elected for two-year terms.
- P= Producer Member
N=Non-Designate Member
- 10. Adjournment – 3:48 PM**

AGM 2019 – Chair Report

LOTS HAS HAPPENED IN THE LAST YEAR AND THE ISSUE AND CONCERN THAT'S ON EVERYONE MIND IS THE NEW TAX CREDIT PROGRAM ALONG WITH A NEW GRANT PROGRAM WITHIN CULTURE, MULTICULTARISM AND THE STATUS OF WOMEN.

- Albertans Elected a new government in April and as member surveys continue to reflect that number one priority member expect from the Association is advocating for the best interest of Alberta producers and the screen industry with the sitting government.
- AMPIA's campaign to educate parties that were the ballot this spring began with the UCP in January of 2018 with then shadow Critic of Culture Ron Orr - Many of you probably met Ron who was a guest at the Rosie Awards in May. Ron quickly became a big advocate and helped introduce us to other key members of the party. Ron's support helped AMPIA gain the best access to all levels of government than we've ever had in the last three decades and helped secure a position regarding the AB screen industry on their platform.
- This summer we began talks with the Alberta Party Leader Stephen Mandel who was first to put a film & television incentive plan that would make AB competitive with BC & ON into his platform. AMPIA worked closely with the party and provided with a document of essential metrics and drivers so they could create a plan for an incentive program that would make AB competitive with BC and ONT.
- The AB party's announcement was followed shortly their after by similar incentive programs on both the UCP NDP platforms.
- For the first time in the history of AB every major party was to create a new Tax Credit program that would make AB competitive in the big business of screen production in Canada. Over \$12 billion annually
- Bill and several board members collaborated with two ad hoc screen industry groups focused on two different approaches of how to make AB competitive with other CDN jurisdictions.

ASIAC – this group led by IATSE focused on being inclusive and disseminating information by bringing all screen industry stakeholders together to discuss current challenges facing its members and how those challenges might be addressed in the future. ASIAC's main activity was focused on town hall meetings and social media focused on the need of lifting the cap and making AB more competitive for foreign and local service producers.

SIC – led by ACTRA, DGC and Calgary Film Commission focused on the 'how', nuts and bolts of a competitive incentive program for foreign and local service producers along with creating a model where foreign production could receive a 22% all spend tax credit and Alberta producers could obtain a minimum of 25%.

While AMPIA board members actively participated with both groups, neither approach fully aligned with AMPIA's obligation to represent AB producers by actively consulting face-to-face with key decision makers in each party and within every level of government.

I'm very proud of the fact that AMPIA is very collaborative with other AD HOC groups the Association cannot effectively represent AB producers when it 'follows'.

In the run up to the election - leaders in both the NDP and UCP urged AMPIA to focus on the 'why'. WHY is the AB screen industry important to diversifying the economy, creating jobs and bringing investment into Alberta from outside the province.

Following the election - we doubled our efforts on the WHY. I asked every board member to meet with at least one UCP MLA or member of Finance and Treasury to tell our story which also included repatriating AB crews from other provinces and the transfer of highly skilled jobs from other industries such as O&G.

The board was very successful consulting directly with MLA's and Ministers and DM's all the way up to the premier's office and focusing on the 'why' for Alberta using independent data, studies and analysis.

In April, Alberta voted in a new UCP government. After reassessing the GOA ledger, the UCP released on budget focused on approach that would eliminate the \$80 billion-dollar provincial debt. While cuts were widespread and the GOA eliminated 5 tax credit programs in other industries - in their first budget they announced the creation a new Tax Credit program for film and television productions with budgets over \$500k to be administered by the department of Economic Development, Trade and Tourism. Projects that are certified would receive 22% all spend for monies spent in AB.

Productions under \$500,000. would remain within the Department of Culture and would only be accessible to Alberta producer. The annual cap of this fund is capped at \$1 million and would provide successful producer applicants 25% all spend grant AMPIA will actively advocate for this cap to be raised to be or exceed previous support of productions of this size but we have yet to confirm a meeting with Minister Aheer discuss the new program.

The new government reported the Tax Credit would operate at the same level budget support put in place by the NDP in 2017 and the first intake for the program would be in April of 2020. In the days following the budget, Detail of both programs were slow to be released created a lot of speculation and significant anxiety throughout the industry.

Prior to industries first meeting with EDTT Minister Tanya Fir, our access was able to get the new government to move the first intake up to January so producers could CMF deadline in April and also get the EDTT to agree to stakeholder meetings in Calgary in Edmonton which will take place in the next few weeks. Minister Fir also agree to work with us to restore the incentive for Alberta producers to the previous 30% all spend.

When myself and other Industry Leaders met as group with Minister Tanya Fir the following week, she reiterated that the UCP would support commitments to projects prior to the election. She reported that historically, to keep productions moving the GOA has always borrowed from years ahead. In this new fiscal environment this leaves \$15 million for new projects in 2020 and \$30 million in 2021 before we reach current budget threshold of \$45 million.

From my talks with the new government they appear to be committed to find a way to elevate our industry within the frame work of the current fiscal environment.

WHAT makes Alberta Producers UNIQUE is that we have significant SKIN in the provincial screen industry

- * More than 9/10 of AB producers own 100% the intellectual property of their productions –
- * This is IP created or acquired with little or no financial support and is most often financed out their own pockets
- * Producers also expend consider resources and finances in the travel that is required in securing the majority of financing for their productions.
- * EVEN before they can apply to our provincial incentive programs AB producers must secure 70% or more of financing of their productions. For every dollar an AB producer receives from the province we bring another three dollars from outside the province – all AB money stays in the province and almost all out of province financing is spent in AB
- * The risk to government is low – productions which receive financing spend their money in Alberta and receive their money from the province 1-2 years after production wraps
- * Given limited access to provincial funds, more and more, AB producers are forced to look for a co-production partners and many have established satellite offices in jurisdictions such as BC where provincial incentives are assured.
- * Once provincial incentives are secured, AB producers are then required - at great risk to their professional and personal finances to **interim finance** production funds required to create their films.

The additional value added producers bring to table is also significant:

- Sharing AB stories and storytellers to the world
- Increased tourism
- Bringing significant investment from outside the province

New Ministry Story – super tanker of cash which is spend in nearly every sector of the prov. economy
&

Creates 70,000 full time jobs

Global Presence - Tourism

AMPIA also made it clear to the Ministry the importance of

- * Continued and increased support of IP development
- * An uncapped fund that would support all budget levels of production both domestic and foreign producers which in turn would support all AB industry stakeholders from film office in Calgary and Edmonton to the Unions and guilds and a fiscal environment to support a legion of Alberta Service Producers.

Also, this spring AMPIA worked on behalf of producers with the GOA to resolve the Corporate Overhead issue that arose after the GOA introduced a more thorough auditing system. This new system resulted in a new and unadvertised requirement to show receipts for corporate overhead – something not done in any other part of the industry. After several meetings with the GOA AMPIA was able to further educate the GOA resolve issue to the benefit of AB producers.

What's next?

- AB screen Industry is in the early stages a new relationship...
- 6 months new government
- 2 weeks with a new Ministry

- Tough fiscal environment for next few years – AMPIA cut 8%

I would suggest that the next 12 months might be the most important in the growing of our industry and making it truly competitive with other Canadian jurisdictions.

It's going to be important for AMPIA remain focused on working directly at every level of the new government.

And just as important that producer members

In ADDITION - we need to address the need for new business approaches for producers that are more effective than the traditional Canadian scarcity model which has finite customers and reliable financing sources.

AMPIA – INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS COMMITTEE CHAIR REPORT

November 16, 2019

To say it has been a busy year in industry relations, is an understatement! I have continued to be in regular contact with the unions and guilds here in Alberta as well as the CMPA nationally. The following are some of my new key findings and insights.

Collective Bargaining Agreements – Ratification of new three-year agreements are now in place nationally for ACTRA, DGC, and the WGC. The agreement with Teamsters Local 362 is about to expire at the end of this year so negotiations for a new agreement are just getting underway.

Industry Stakeholder Groups – I have spent the majority of my time working with and attending meetings with the Screen Industries Committee (SIC), the Alberta Screen Industries Action Committee (ASIAC), and the Executive Board at AMPIA throughout the year trying to find common ground for an approach to a new industry funding model. We pushed hard for a new competitive financing model and helped make it onto the political platforms of all the major parties in the last election. As we all know, the UCP have committed to a new tax credit system that will be competitive with the likes of BC and Ontario. So far it is safe to say that we got half of what we wanted. We have a tax credit but it is far from competitive with other jurisdictions. We are working hard on this front now with regular consultations with the ministers and Alberta. We need funding certainty in order to retain production and grow into the future.

There has been a lot of negativity surrounding this new funding system but a big positive from an industry perspective is how unified we are now in our message and actions to government. At the beginning of the year there were multiple stakeholder groups all having their own agendas and it was a struggle to find common ground. Just recently after the budget announcement, every major stakeholder agreed to sign a letter to the UCP asking to be part of meaningful consultation on the new funding system and within days they responded. Several meetings have already occurred and will continue to happen with the ministers and their staff. We have a long way to go but at least we are moving forward together in the right direction.

Best,

Eric

Eric Rebalkin
AMPIA Vice Chair-North & IR Committee Chair
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Professional Development Report November 16, 2019

I will start by saying we had one of our best years for professional development, our participation from the community was phenomenal. That being said with the new realities of today's Alberta Film situation a majority of our filmmakers have new concerns and challenges we need to find ways to overcome.

At this time I feel we must consult with our members, focusing on what it is that they need to help find stability in these uncertain times. Professional Development can't solve all the issues but their might be away we can help out. So there will be a meeting for our members to come talk about their new challenges and how we from a PD stand point can best support them going forward. This will be in Edmonton and Calgary with the ability to email in any thoughts if you cannot attend.

Last year our banner event Story Studio, exceeded all expectations. The plan going forward was to improve the event from industry feedback by bringing in more industry connections for sales, distribution and creative growth.

Our producer accelerator helped connect students and emerging filmmakers with industry to develop new relationships and to get an understanding of how to transition into the industry. We had partnerships with Unions, Guilds, local producers/filmmakers and the NFB focusing on growth and development.

We supported filmmakers to help get overseas with a project, as well helping Good Pitch Documentary program participants, Edmonton Film Festival, Calgary film festival, Edmonton Shorts and FAVA Fest. All of the partnerships provide growth from AMPIA and our members.

We also partnered with organizations such as ESIO, Calgary Film, ACTRA, DGC to hold different events and support our industry.

I plan to have us build off the past success but incorporate the changes needed to support our members at this time.

Dylan Pearce
Committee Chair

AMPIA Events Committee Nov. 16 2019

The date for our event is confirmed for Saturday May 23, 2020 at The Hyatt in Calgary.

We are once again pleased to be working with Boom Goes the Drum who handled our last two award shows.

Budget for the event is still being determined and we may see a reduction in funding this year.

Although our event is back at the Hyatt this year, we did investigate many other venues along the way including The Webber Academy, the U of C, MRU, BMO Centre and the Grey Eagle. Making a change to these would have meant:

- Structural changes to the show to allow for a soft seat venue
- Dividing our show into two parts, or separate shows
- Moving the show out of the downtown area

The above would have been considered had we found a great cost reduction in moving our show. However, the cost of the Hyatt compared to any of the other options did not offer significant savings to warrant these changes, which were deemed a downgrade to the quality of the evening.

We had also put out a survey to our membership about what was working in our current format – or not:

1. The most important elements of the show are the networking opportunity followed by recognition of work.
2. A seated dinner is the format of choice.
3. It is important to see clips of the nominated and winning work.
4. It is important to hear speeches from winners.
5. Many would prefer a shorter show with fewer clips/speeches to dividing the awards into two shows.
6. Many would be in favour of a lower ticket price even if food value was reduced.
7. Ticket price limits the number of tickets purchased by a company or production.
8. People choose to attend only if nominated – however, this answer came at a narrow margin.

Our take away of the survey is that members want an evening that is:

- Shorter
- More interesting, with more networking
- Less expensive

Given the results of the survey, this is a holy trinity of impossibility. Going forward, we will be working with Boom to put on the best show possible at the Hyatt within our budget.

One other takeaway we had from our research is that people want an official after party outside of the formality of the event. We are looking into several options nearby the Hyatt.

AMPIA Story and Branding Committee Annual Report November 16, 2019

Since taking over as Chair in January, AMPIA has continued to build its brand as an A - Political body with a good reputation and unique access to Government. AMPIA strives to approach issues by being respectful, responsible and reasonable.

AMPIA has demonstrated this over the past several months in its approach to successfully getting all the provincial political parties to commit to supporting and growing the screen industry in each of their election platforms.

AMPIA followed that up post election by meeting with as many MLAs as possible to educate and bring awareness to how the industry operates and how integral it is to the economy especially when it comes to diversification. There were also many behind the scenes meetings incorporating the same measured approach. Together that has resulted in the first ever Tax Credit Program for the screen industry in Alberta history.

AMPIA continues to collaborate with Government to ensure the Tax Credit is implemented in an efficient manner, with as much funding available as possible and reducing the amount of red tape that has in previous years held up the industry.

AMPIA's goal is to build upon the recent successes to allow Alberta to be competitive with the screen industries in BC and Ontario.

AMPIA is working to rebuild our relationships with Alberta TV Stations. Jordan Scott is a Producer with Global Calgary. He has reached out to the Director of Creative Services for Global across the country. Jeff Eisler is interested in having Global Calgary and hopefully Edmonton rejoin AMPIA. He is concerned that there aren't enough awards that reflect Global's production output.

Are any TV stations still involved with AMPIA?

What awards still cater to TV stations? Would AMPIA consider bringing back or creating new categories to entice the stations back?

Michelle Gayse Leader
Committee Chair

AMPIA Meeting Report
Membership Committee Update
November 14, 2019

A recap of the Membership initiatives for 2018-2019.

- Front Row preferred Insurance rates/discounts have been provided.
- Release templates were provided for free membership access via a new membership portal.
- Free memberships were offered to Indigenous Creators (with some update) from a recent STORYHIVE edition.
- A health insurance option was developed in collaboration with APPA. The survey to membership, which was published several times in the newsletter and on various social platforms, indicates there is very limited interest at this time. AMPIA's response numbers were 18 responses (13-Yes and 5-No). APPA's members returned at 5-Yes and 4-No. This information is for Board review, further discussion and/or closure of project.
- Provincial Budget efforts: Two personal meetings have been held with Minister Tanya Fir, as Laura O'Grady lives in her constituency. While Minister Fir seems open to learning more about the industry, this relationship and conversation is still ongoing.
- Still pending: A short survey has been drafted to forward to industry students/professionals who are not members, a tool to ascertain what services would encourage new memberships. Awaiting final feedback on the draft before sending into market, on hold due to recent SPG survey/provincial budget efforts.
- Still ongoing: Investigating possibility of engaging local small market advocates to increase membership. Arjan Gill has recently formed the Lethbridge Independent Film Society, and has agreed to collaborate on future professional development opportunities if available. Possible "small market" rates for AMPIA membership?
- Would AMPIA be interested in developing a diversity initiative/strategy to broaden our membership? This would benefit from a subcommittee, possibly solicited by the newsletter.